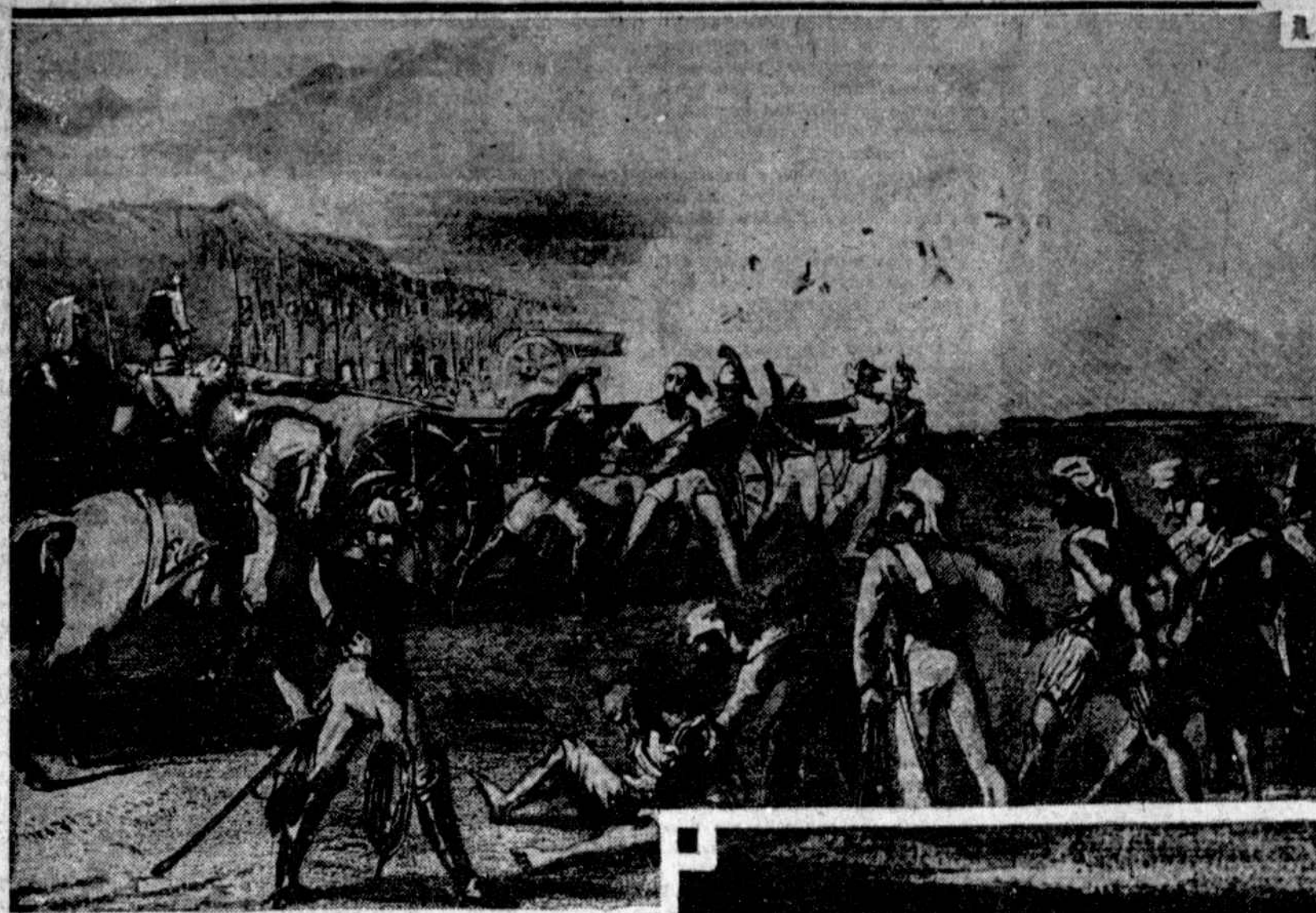


# RACES AND RELIGIONS, UNITING AS IN THE SEPOY UPRISING IN 1857, THREATEN SPREAD OF ANTI-BRITISH REVOLT IN INDIA



Historic painting dealing with the great uprising of 1857—British blowing patriotic Sepoys from the guns.

**Crude Acts of Tyranny Fanning the Flames of Revolution—Former Allies of the Foreign Commanders Are Taking Up the Struggle With Their Fellow-Natives—Sikhs, Gurkhas, and Others Showing Signs of Disaffection. General Unrest Is Making Soldiers Into Rebels Against the Ruling Power—Ammunition and Arms in Plenty Have Been Made Ready for the Initial Stroke.**

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PRESS dispatches from India and England have already begun speaking of the mysterious movements of British troops in India. General Lord Rawlinson, the commander-in-chief of the British military forces in India, has recently more than once gone on record to say that he most decidedly expects uprisings in India of rather serious character. Consequently he is vehemently opposed to the reduction of military expenditure in India that is daily growing more and more militant, especially after the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, who did his utmost to keep the movement absolutely peaceful, at least for the time being and until the opportune moment arrived.

Gandhi is more admired and revered than followed in the land of his birth. His failure to keep India peaceful lands him into prison today. And the tide of militancy is rising so high that the British government is considering the suspension of civil authorities, and the placing of the entire country under strict and stringent martial law, so that every man, every woman and every child may be summarily shot dead who dares to show the least patriotic feeling, and challenge, in thought, action or word the political and military supremacy of the British in India.

## SPIRIT OF REVOLT DEEP.

It is daily becoming apparent that the spirit of revolt against British rule is so deep seated and widespread that an eruption cannot be long delayed. The forces that developed India's war of independence of 1857 are active again, only in a more dynamically vital way. The secret revolutionary activities which began in Bengal and in Maharashtra have spread all over India.

The disloyalty of the Indian troops is daily becoming more evident. During the Sepoy war of 1857 the Sikh princes and the Sikh soldiers sided with the British to avenge their wrath against the Mogul dynasty. But the Hindus and the Mohammedans were united as one in their opposition against the British. Hindu generals and Mohammedan generals, Hindu troops and Mohammedan troops fought side by side against the British.

But the mighty Sikhs have at last awakened from an ignoble dream. It is the Sikh soldiery that has formed the principal bulwark of British paramountcy in India

and the East. And the British Empire in the East rests on the loyalty of the Sikh. But the Sikh has changed.

By experience—by suffering, sorrow and insult—the Sikh has at last discovered that he is nothing more than a willing slave to the Briton.

With the dawning of this consciousness he is showing signs of revolt, and the British are taking special care to preserve the loyalty of the Sikh. The Briton has met with but little success in this attempt of his. Peaceful persuasion has failed, and coercion has already begun against the Sikh, so much so, that even the Sikh temple at Nankhan Sahel has been outraged by the Briton.

Latest papers from India relate stories how, about a month ago, Hindu temples, Mohammedan mosques and the Sikh granth were subjected to British outrage.

Crude acts of British tyranny are fanning the flames of revolution in India. The Sikh revolutionists are seriously affected. The Gurkhas are the worst, nationally speaking. Wherever there is to be a filthy piece of military work to be done, there the Gurkhas are sent. They are Mongolian in race and come from the foot of the Himalayas.

## DEFY BRITISH ORDER

When the valiant Moplahs rose last summer, the Hindu, Moslem and Sikh soldiers could not be trusted with the campaign against them. It was the Gurkhas who fought against the Moplahs. And such are, indeed, the currents of thought in India today that even a few amongst the Gurkhas are showing signs of revolt. Recently the members of the outlawed National Volunteers were marching through the streets of Calcutta in open defiance of British ordinances, and



these rebels were joined by a few mutinous Gurkhas.

The story of the greased cartridge and the annexation of Oudh were not the real causes of the uprising. The real cause was India's desire to win India's independence by throwing off the British yoke.

Not only the Hindu and Moslem soldiers in the British army of occupation mutined, but rose also in open revolution, Emperor, Rajas, Ranees, Ranas, landlords, merchants, priests, peasants and workmen.

Writes Justin McCarthy in his "History of Our Own Times": "The fact was that throughout the greater part of the northern and northwestern provinces of the Indian peninsula, there was a rebellion of the native races against English power."

"It was not alone the Sepoys who rose in revolt—it was not by any means a merely military mutiny. . . . The quarrel about the greased cartridges was but the chance spark flung in among all the combustible material. If that spark had not lit it, some other would have done the work. The Meerut Sepoys found in a moment, a leader, a flag, and a cause, and the mutiny was transformed into a revolutionary war."

Lakshmi Bai, Rane of Jhansi, one of the royal women leaders of the 1857 uprising.

by the same British, the various sects and races and provinces of India today have become more united and infinitely more resolved to throw off the galling yoke of British despotism. In 1857 the people of India were not disarmed. India used to manufacture cannons, guns, rifles, bullets and gunpowder. India's soldiers were capable of handling huge cannons. They were supplied with the best of rifles, and they were trained into being officers.

DISARMED BY BRITISH. But ever since the war of 1857, Indians have been forcibly disarmed by the British. The manufacture of arms and ammunition is exclusively controlled by the British.

India's women have been ever warlike. Here is presented Princess Chand Bibi, the defender of Ahmadnagar against Akbar, the great Mogul emperor, in 1603.

British army are armed with inferior arms, and their movements are vigilantly watched by experts. I personally know of many soldiers who were and even today are severely punished for attending Indian patriotic meetings for the boycott of British goods.

These and other disabilities, and the general unrest in India are making rebels of Indian soldiers in British employ. Consequently they and the Indian revolutionary leaders are now engaged in deriving the moral from the struggle of 1857.

## TWO HAVE JOINED HANDS.

Today, as around the saintly personality of Mahatma Gandhi the Hindus and the Mohammedans have joined hands, similarly in 1857 around the personality of the Mogul Emperor Bahadur Shah the Hindus and the Mohammedans united and rent the sky with united war cry of Hara, Hara (Hindu war cry), Din, Din (Mohammedan war cry)—Din, Din, Hara, Hara. In 1857 India produced only a few able generals. The paucity of their number insured the failure of their fight. Emperor Bahadur Shah was old



Kooman Singh, one of India's historic figures, who fought valiantly against the British in the Sepoy rebellion.

and feeble and lacking in courage. Nana Sahib was a brave diplomat, but not a great general. Moulavi Ahmed Shah, an expert leader in guerrilla warfare. Kooman Singh, the lion of Jagadishpur, was an expert general and fearless fighter.

At various encounters the British generals had occasion to know that, though his resources were limited, as a military commander he was more than a match for them. Tantia Tope was the ablest Indian military commander the revolution produced. He was a childhood friend of Nana Sahib. His power of organization, quickness of decision and consummate generalship remind one of Napoleon. Tantia, however, lacked the luck for success which attended Napoleon's campaign.

## INSPIRATION A WOMAN.

The unalloyed embodiment of the very soul of this great revolutionary war, however, was a woman, Queen Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. As the name of Joan of Arc is known in France, similarly the name of the Rane (queen) of Jhansi is known in India. Such is the inspiration of her example that she is canonized in the hearts of the people of India.

During festive occasions numerous songs are still sung in her honor. Here are the first two lines of a song composed in 1858: "Khud tari mardani, aray Jhansivali Rane."

"Burjan burjan topain lagai dain, gold chalai asmanee."

The song reads in translation:

"Well fought the brave one, O the Rane of Jhansi!

"The Guns were placed in the towers, the magic balls were fired."

"O, the Rane of Jhansi, well fought the brave one. All the soldiers were fed with

sweets; she herself had molasses and rice.

"O, the Rane of Jhansi, well fought the brave one."

"Leaving her palace, she fled to the army, where she searched and found no water."

"O, the Rane of Jhansi, well fought the brave one."

The Rane of Jhansi was born in 1835. She was a cousin of Nana Sahib Beshwa. Both were reared together in the same palace of Bhramavarta, and both were trained in the use of firearms and swords and in military science under the same teachers. They played and rode together, and together they dreamed of a free India. Her pet name at home was Chabul.

She was married to Prince Ganadhar Rao of Jhansi. Her husband suddenly died in 1853, and she adopted Damodar as her son. The British government arbitrarily denied her the right of adoption, and forcibly announced the annexation of Jhansi. The Rane, however, denied the order of the British government and declared: "I will not give up my Jhansi. Let him take who dares."

After the fall of Delhi and Lucknow things looked gloomy for the revolutionists in the north. All the important strongholds were captured by the British only when helped by the renegade princes and their soldiers. So the revolutionary leaders of Oudh and Rohilkhand decided to take to guerrilla warfare and issued the following proclamation:

"Do not attempt to meet the regular columns of the British in open battle, because they are superior to you in discipline and they have big guns. But watch their movements, guard all the ghats on the rivers, intercept their communications, stop their supplies, cut up their daks and posts and keep

Another historic scene from the stirring days of 1857, Nana Sahib and his escort.

constantly hanging about their camp."

## SEAT OF WAR SHIFTED.

While guerrilla warfare was going on in the north the principal seat of war shifted further south. The Queen of Jhansi was preparing to declare open war on the British. Numerous revolutionists from the north rushed to Jhansi, and Jhansi, under the able leadership of her twenty-three-year-old Queen and general, was well prepared to strike a blow against the British for the independence of the motherland. The Rane herself looked after the fortifications and placement of guns on the ramparts of her forts. Both men and women worked together for the manufacture of guns and ammunition, and both men and women were drilled to join the ensuing fight.

## ENGAGEMENT BEGUN.

At last on the 20th of March, 1858, the British troops, under General Sir Hugh Rose, encamped fourteen miles away from Jhansi.

The engagement began on the 24th. Regular fight thickened the next day. The British were helpless before the Rane's guns, like Gneam Kahn and Khuda Baksh. "The Queen herself led the whole army. On every rampart and every gate, she was standing about actively; she was standing where guns were being planted and moved into position; she was busy selecting clever gunners, and she was to be found everywhere, inspiring heroism even in the coldest hearts."

## SILENCED QUEEN'S GUNS.

Thus re-enforced, the British began their assault again on April 3, and succeeded at last in silencing the guns of the Rane. The southern gate fell first and the British entered Jhansi. The Rane, with about 1,500 men, rushed toward the British, and with her sword mowed down the British soldiers, and at last escaped through the British lines by a clever ruse. One maid and about fifteen horsemen formed her bodyguard. She galloped at full speed, and the "Maharatta Queen was as much at ease galloping a horse as in the zenana listening to her favorite minstrel."

## KILLED MAID'S SLAYER.

Her maid was killed by an English soldier, and quietly she killed the English soldier. At last, by sheer force of superhuman valor, she broke through the British lines, and galloped her horse. She was followed by several English soldiers. When she was about to be out of the reach of the enemy soldiers her new horse refused to jump over a narrow rill. The English soldiers soon attacked her, and single-handed, she fought against them all for a long time, killing several. At last a chivalrous English soldier struck her from behind, and the right side of her head with the right eye was cut open. Another English sword struck her on the chest.

Thus the Rane of Jhansi, the illustrious Lakshmi Bai, died fighting for the independence of her country. As Princess Chand Bibi defended Ahmadnagar against the mighty Mogul Emperor Akbar, so the Rane of Jhansi defended the honor of India against the British. Jhansi was annexed and the Rane was killed, but her memory still lives in the hearts of millions of Indians today.